

### REMARKS

This communication is in response to the final Office Action mailed February 9, 2009, in which Claims 1-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,524,104, to Iwata et al. Claims 1-4, 6-7, 9, 12, and 13 have been amended. Claims 1-13 remain pending.

Applicant would like to thank Examiner Blouin for conducting an Examiner Interview on March 24, 2009. During that interview, Examiner Blouin further clarified the Examiner's Note on page 4 of the Office Action recommending adding limitations to the independent Claims 1 and 7 describing the structural detail of the connecting means (5) clearly shown in FIGURE 4 of the applicant's drawings. Applicant appreciates Examiner Blouin's suggestion during the interview that amending independent Claims 1 and 7 would place the claims in condition for allowance.

Without admitting to the propriety of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejections of Claims 1-13, applicant has amended Claims 1 and 7 consistent with Examiner Blouin's suggestions so as to advance prosecution in this case. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejections of Claims 1-13 and allowance of the claims.

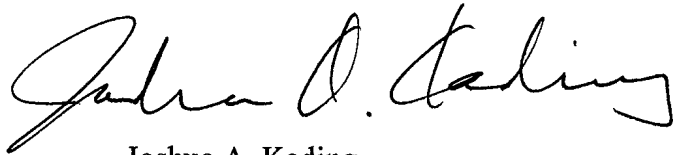
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CONCLUSION

Applicant submits that this is a full and complete response to the final Office Action mailed February 9, 2009. If there are any remaining issues that may be resolved by a telephone interview, or if an Examiner's Amendment is needed to correct any minor informalities before allowance, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR  
JOHNSON KINDNESS<sup>PLLC</sup>

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joshua A. Kading". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joshua" being the most prominent part.

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